

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01 EA-11

RSR-01 /100 W

----- 063594

R 101553Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 524

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: SW PINT

SUBJECT: CHALLENGER FALLDIN STAKES OUT FOREIGN POLICY LINE

CLOSE TO PALME'S

REF: STOCKHOLM 2720

SUMMARY: CENTER PARTY AND ITS LEADER, FALLDIN, ADOPT FOREIGN POLICY PLANK FOR ELECTION CAMPAIGN WHICH DOES NOT TAKE ISSUE WITH SUBSTANCE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FOREIGN POLICY. FALLDIN TELLS PRESS HE AGREES IN SUBSTANCE WITH SOCDEM CRITICISM OF U.S. ON INDOCHINA AND CAMBODIA BOMBING BUT MAINTAINS CRITICISM OF PALME PERSONALLY FOR BEING "UNNECESSARILY PROVOCATIVE." FALLDIN'S PURPOSE IS APPARENTLY TO KEEP FOREIGN POLICY OUT OF ELECTION DEBATE ON PRESUMPTION THAT BASIS PALME LINE WOULD WIN HIM MORE VOTES THAN IT WOULD COST HIM IF IT WERE MADE AN ISSUE. END SUMMARY

UNCLASSIFIED

1. CENTER PARTY LEADER FALLDIN, PRESUMPTIVE SUCCESSOR TO OLOF PALME IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ARE TURNED OUT OF OFFICE, STAKED OUT HIS POSITION THIS WEEK ON FOREIGN POLICY IN GENERAL AND RELATIONS
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WITH U.S. IN PARTICULAR.

2. INTERVIEWED BY MALMO NEWSPAPER, SKANSKA DAGBLADET, ON SOCDEC CHARGE HE WAS TWO-FACED ON NOTORIOUS PALME STATEMENT ON HANOI BOMBING (REFTEL), FALLDIN SAID HE DID NOT CHALLENGE SOCDEM POLICY ON VIETNAM BUT THOUGHT PALME'S CHOICE OF LANGUAGE IN EXPRESSING IT WAS "UNNECESSARILY PROVOCATIVE."

3. TO QUESTION WHETHER HE THOUGHT SWEDEN SHOULD TRY TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH U.S. , FALLDIN REPLIED: "I FIND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE AMERICAN REACTION, AND I DO NOT KNOW WHAT MEANS THERE ARE FOR SWEDEN TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. ALL POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE DECLARED HOW THEY REGARD THE AMERICAN ACTION IN VIETNAM. AND I STILL HOLD THE VIEW WHICH FOUND EXPRESSION THE (DEC 28 FIVE-PARTY) DECLARATION. IF NOW THIS CAN BE TAKEN AS AN EXCUSE FOR FREEZING RELATIONS WITH SWEDEN, THEN WE CANNOT DO VERY MUCH ABOUT IT. FOR IT WAS A CATEGORICAL STATEMENT THAT WE DO NOT RETRACT OUR CALL UPON THE U.S. TO STOP BOMBING AND UPON OTHER SIDE TO STOP FIGHTING."

4. AT NEWS CONFERENCE IN FALUN AUG 9. FALLDIN RETURNED TO THE SUBJECT. TO A LEADING QUESTION AS TO WHAT HE WOULD THINK IF U.S. WITHHELD APPOINTMENT OF AN AMBASSADOR UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION FALLDIN SAID IT WOULD BE "REGRETTABLE" IF U.S. SO "INTERFERED" IN CAMPAIGN. "THERE IS NO POLITICAL REASON FOR U.S. TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN A BOURGEOIS AND A SOCDEM GOVERNMENT IN SWEDEN," HE SAID.

5. FALLDIN THEN RESTATED VIEWS SET FORTH IN PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4 ABOVE AND ADDED THAT BOMBING OF CAMBODIA WAS "JUST AS INDEFENSIBLE AS BOMBING OF HANOI." " I SEE NO SENSE IN LETTING THE BOMBINGS CONTINUE UNTIL A CERTAIN DATE ONLY BECAUSE THERE IS A FORMAL RIGHT TO DO SO," HE SAID.

6. ASKED ABOUT WATERGATE, HE SAID: "IS THERE MORE THAN ONE THOUGHT ONE CAN HAVE? IT IS ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE THAT SUCH THINGS CAN HAPPEN, BUT I WISH TO VOICE MY RESPECT FOR THE WAY THEY ARE TRYING TO INVESTIGATE THE AFFAIR."

7. ON GENERAL FOREIGN POLICY, FOLLOWING IS PLANK NO. 1 IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CENTER PARTY CAMPAIGN PLATFORM ADOPTED AT PARTY'S FALUN CONGRESS AUG 9: "CENTER UNDERSCORES IN PARTICULAR THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING A FIRM AND CONSISTENT POLICY OF NEUTRALITY AND A POLICY OF DEFENSE AS THE BASIS FOR OUR EFFORTS TO PRESERVE OUR FREEDOM OF ACTION IN FOREIGN POLICY AND TO PROMOTE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN THE WORLD."

8. AT FALUN NEWS CONFERENCE FALLDIN AVOIDED TAKING FLAT STAND

ON WHETHER HE WOULD OR WOULD NOT APPOINT MODERATE LEADER BOHMAN
FOREIGN MINISTER IN A FALLDIN-LED CABINET. FALLDIN SAID HE
WOULD NOT DISTRIBUTE MINISTRIES IN ADVANCE AND IN ANY EVENT
FOREIGN POLICY OF A BOURGEOIS GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO HAVE
CENTER AND LIBERAL PARTY APPROVAL. END UNCLASSIFIED

COMMENT: IT SEEMS CLEAR FALLDIN IS TRYING TO TAKE FOREIGN POLICY-
AND PARTICULARLY RELATIONS WITH U.S. - OUT OF ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN.
HIS METHOD IS TO APPEAR TO AGREE WHOLEHEARTEDLY WITH PRESUMABLY
POLULAR SOCDEEM ATTITUDES ON U.S. AND INDOCHINA WHILE CRITICIZING
PALME ONLY FOR IMMODERATE EXPRESSION OF THOSE VIEWS. HIS CAREFUL
DISTANCING HIMSELF FROM BOHMAN IS IN SAME VEIN, SINCE MODERATES
DO TAKE SERIOUS ISSUE WITH SOCDEM PFOREIGN POLICY. ALL THIS
REQUIRES FALLDIN TO ENGAGE IN CERTAIN AMOUNT OF VERBAL TRICKERY.
FOR EXAMPLE, HE KNOWS VERY WELL THAT U.S- SWEDEN "CHILL" DID NOT
ARISE FROM FIVE-PARTY STATEMENT IN DECEMBER, A STATEMENT WHICH
BOHMAN INSISTED (OVER PALME'S OBJECTIONS AND FALLDIN' S INDIFFER-
ENCE) BE ADDRESSED EVENHANDEDLY TO ALL PARTIES TO INDOCHINA
CONFLICT. END COMMENT
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